

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-6. (Cancelled).

7. (Currently Amended) An appliance for opening and closing reagent container stoppers in partially or fully automatic analysis apparatus, comprising:

a plunger for opening and closing a reagent container stopper by engaging and releasing a catch on the reagent container stopper, the plunger movable between an at rest position and a working position;

an automatic conveyor for moving the reagent container relative to the plunger, wherein the conveyor is movable in a first direction to place the plunger in a position to open the stopper, and wherein the conveyor is movable in a second direction, opposite to the first direction, to place the plunger in a position to close the stopper; and

a structure for translating movement of a pipetting-needle carrier to the plunger to cause movement of the plunger,

wherein the structure for translating movement includes means for moving the plunger in a downward direction in response to movement of the pipetting-needle carrier in an upward direction.

8. (Cancelled).

9. (Currently Amended) The appliance of claim 7 ~~[[8]]~~, wherein the structure for translating movement includes two rocker arms and a stop rod, the stop rod being connected to and positioned between the two rocker arms, the stop rod also being connected to the pipetting-needle carrier, such that the stop rod moves with the pipetting-needle carrier.

10. (Currently Amended) The appliance of claim 7 ~~[[8]]~~, further comprising a traction drive for moving the pipetting-needle carrier.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ An appliance of claim 7 for opening and closing reagent container stoppers in partially or fully automatic analysis apparatus, comprising:
a plunger for opening and closing a reagent container stopper by engaging and releasing a catch on the reagent container stopper, the plunger movable between an at rest position and a working position;

an automatic conveyor for moving the reagent container relative to the plunger, wherein the conveyor is movable in a first direction to place the plunger in a position to open the stopper, and wherein the conveyor is movable in a second direction, opposite to the first direction, to place the plunger in a position to close the stopper; and
a structure for translating movement of a pipetting-needle carrier to the plunger to cause movement of the plunger,

wherein the structure for translating movement includes a thrust plate and a catch member, wherein the thrust plate is engagable with the plunger, and wherein the catch member is connected to a means for driving the pipetting-needle carrier, such that

movement of the pipetting-needle carrier in a first direction results in movement of the catch member and thrust plate in a second direction opposite the first direction.

12-13. (Cancelled).

14. (Previously Presented) The appliance of claim 9, wherein one of the rocker arms is rotatably connected to a first end of the stop rod and wherein the other of the rocker arms is rotatably connected to an opposite end of the stop rod.

15. (Previously Presented) The appliance of claim 14, wherein vertical movement of the pipetting-needle carrier results in rotational movement of the rocker arms with respect to the stop rod.

16. (New) The appliance of claim 7, wherein the structure for translating movement includes a thrust plate and a catch member, wherein the thrust plate is engagable with the plunger, and wherein the catch member is connected to a means for driving the pipetting-needle carrier, such that movement of the pipetting-needle carrier in a first direction results in movement of the catch member and thrust plate in a second direction opposite the first direction.

17. (New) The appliance of claim 11, wherein the structure for translating movement includes means for moving the plunger in a downward direction in response to movement of the pipetting-needle carrier in an upward direction.

18. (New) The appliance of claim 17, wherein the structure for translating movement includes two rocker arms and a stop rod, the stop rod being connected to and positioned between the two rocker arms, the stop rod also being connected to the pipetting-needle carrier, such that the stop rod moves with the pipetting-needle carrier.

19. (New) The appliance of claim 11, further comprising a traction drive for moving the pipetting-needle carrier.

20. (New) The appliance of claim 18, wherein one of the rocker arms is rotatably connected to a first end of the stop rod and wherein the other of the rocker arms is rotatably connected to an opposite end of the stop rod.

21. (New) The appliance of claim 21, wherein vertical movement of the pipetting-needle carrier results in rotational movement of the rocker arms with respect to the stop rod.